

## **FEDERAL APPELLATE PRACTICE TAKES A MAJOR STEP FORWARD WITH THE FORMATION OF THIRD CIRCUIT BAR ASSOCIATION**

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**(March 5, 2007, Philadelphia, PA)** Long regarded as one of the nation's leading federal Courts of Appeals, the Third Circuit now has a Bar Association to call its own. With the endorsement of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, a dedicated group of appellate practitioners from each of the districts within the Circuit has formed a Third Circuit Bar Association. The Association seeks to improve the quality of appellate practice within the Circuit and strengthen the relationships among the Court, its staff, and practitioners.

Modeled after circuit-wide bar associations in other circuits, the Third Circuit Association has established some ambitious goals. The Association intends to raise the standards of appellate practice, help develop rules of practice, promote events and educational programs that will aid the Court in the administration of justice, and facilitate bench/bar relations. One particular goal will be to assist the Court in the planning and staging of its Judicial Conference. Held every other year, this Conference brings judges and practitioners together from all corners of the Circuit in educational programming.

The Association has been spearheaded by Nancy Winkelman (Schrader Harrison Segal & Lewis LLP, Philadelphia, PA), who is its first President, and Jim Martin (Reed Smith, LLP, Pittsburgh, PA), who is the President-Elect. The two met as fellows in the American Academy of Appellate Lawyers, and the collaboration on starting the association took flight from there. "We are very excited by this opportunity to help educate Third Circuit practitioners about federal appellate practice and improve their relationship with the Court," said Winkelman. "And we are just as excited about the opportunities to help the Court and our colleagues by working to raise the level of practice and assisting with the Judicial Conference."

Martin added that one novel aspect of the Association's mission will be its devotion to federal appellate practice. "This is an area we believe has not received as much attention as it should, and we are going to try to bridge that gap."

The enthusiasm for the Association's formation extends to the Court as well. "We view the establishment of the Association as a very positive step forward in helping to promote excellence in federal appellate practice," commented Chief Judge Anthony J. Scirica. "The Court is committed to help the Association accomplish its mission. This is an idea whose time definitely has come." The Honorable D. Michael Fisher and the Honorable Thomas L. Ambro have enthusiastically agreed to serve as liaisons to the Association.

Court administrators also will be closely involved with the Association's work. Toby Slawsky, the Court's Circuit Executive, commented that her staff is especially appreciative of the lawyers' willingness to assist in organizing the programs and other aspects of the Judicial Conference. "We consider the Conference to be a premier event. The support from the Association will make it better still," she said.

The Association is open to all members of the Third Circuit Bar. The officers and Board of Governors come from all parts of the Circuit. Apart from Winkelman and Martin, the officers are: Stephen Orlofsky (Blank Rome LLP, Cherry Hill, NJ), who is the Treasurer, and C.J. Seitz (Connolly Bove Lodge & Hutz LLP, Wilmington, DE), who is the Secretary. The Board of Governors is drawn from each District within the Circuit and from several at-large seats, and comprises some of the most highly regarded practitioners in the Circuit, including Charles Craven (Marshall, Dennehey, Warner, Coleman & Goggin, Philadelphia, PA); Paul Fishman (Friedman Kaplan Seiler & Adelman LLP, Newark, NJ); Lisa Freeland (Federal Public Defender, Western District of Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, PA); Peter Goldberger (Law Office of Peter Goldberger, Ardmore, PA); Robert Graci (Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC, Harrisburg, PA); Cynthia Jacob (Fisher & Phillips LLP, Somerset, NJ); John Knorr (Chief

Deputy Attorney General, Harrisburg, PA); John Parkins (Richard Layton & Finger, Wilmington, DE); Andrew Simpson (Andrew C. Simpson, P.C., St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands); and Mary Gibbons Whipple (Whipple Law Firm, P.C., Morristown, NJ). “As the Board composition reflects, we have private and public lawyers, large firm and small firm lawyers, criminal and civil lawyers. We are trying to be as inclusive as possible so we can obtain the most balanced views,” Martin said.

Winkelman added that the dues are set with this goal in mind also. “We have set the dues at the modest amount of \$35 a year to encourage the broadest participation possible. We intend to design and present our programs in a way that will benefit the experienced and novice practitioners alike no matter what their area of practice. I am hopeful that Third Circuit practitioners will make the most of it.”

For more information about the Third Circuit Bar Association, contact Nancy Winkelman at (215) 751-2342, [nwinkelman@schnader.com](mailto:nwinkelman@schnader.com), or Jim Martin at (412) 288-3546, [jcmartin@reedsmith.com](mailto:jcmartin@reedsmith.com).